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*B1*  
*OK*  
a projection optical system for projecting a pattern of the original onto a substrate to be exposed; and  
gas purging means for replacing an inside space, which [contains] accommodates optical components of at least one of said illumination optical system and said projection optical system, with a dry gas [having substantially no water content].

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6. (Twice Amended) An exposure apparatus, comprising:

an illumination optical system for illuminating an original with ultraviolet light;

*B2*  
a projection optical system for projecting a pattern of the original onto a substrate to be exposed;

gas purging means for replacing an inside space, which contains optical components of at least one of said illumination optical system and said projection optical system, with a particular gas, said optical components comprising at least one lens;

passage means, mutually communicating spaces separated by said optical components, for assisting in gas purging by said gas purging means; and

a support for supporting said at least one lens, wherein said passage means comprises an aperture formed in said support, and

wherein a straight line connecting apertures of a pair of adjacent supports of said passage means is not parallel to a plane defined by an optical axis of a lens which is one of the optical components and a straight line connecting apertures of another pair of adjacent supports.

14. (Amended) An exposure apparatus, comprising:  
an illumination optical system for illuminating an original;

a projection optical system for projecting a pattern of the original onto a substrate to be exposed;

gas purging means for replacing, with a particular gas, an inside space which contains optical components of at least one of said illumination optical system and said projection optical system, said optical components comprising at least one lens; and

a plurality of passage means, mutually communicating spaces separated by said optical components, for assisting in gas purging by said gas purging means,

wherein a straight line connecting an adjacent pair of said plurality of passage means provided in [the] a same casing for gas purging, is not parallel to a plane defined by an optical axis of said at least one lens and a straight line

connecting another adjacent pair of said plurality of passage means.

*Sub 4*  
comprising:

15. (Amended) A device manufacturing method,  
illuminating an original with ultraviolet light using  
an illumination optical system;  
projecting, using a projection optical system, a  
pattern of the original onto a substrate to be exposed to  
manufacture a device; and  
replacing, using gas purging means, an inside space,  
which [contains] accommodates optical components of at least one  
of the illumination optical system and the projection optical  
system, with a dry gas [having substantially no water content].

16. (Amended) A device manufacturing method,  
comprising:  
illuminating an original with ultraviolet light using  
an illumination optical system;  
projecting, using a projection optical system, a  
pattern of the original onto a substrate to be exposed to  
manufacture a device;  
replacing, using gas purging means, an inside space,  
which contains optical components of at least one of the

illumination optical system and the projection optical system,  
with a particular gas, the optical components comprising at least  
one lens;

mutually communicating, using passage means, spaces  
separated by the optical components, for assisting in gas purging  
by the gas purging means; and

supporting the at least one lens using a support,  
wherein the passage means comprises an aperture  
formed in the support, and

wherein a straight line connecting apertures of a  
pair of adjacent supports of said passage means is not parallel  
to a plane defined by an optical axis of a lens which is one of  
the optical components and a straight line connecting apertures  
of another pair of adjacent supports.

18. (Amended) A device manufacturing method,  
comprising:

illuminating an original using an illumination  
optical system;

projecting, using a projection optical system, a  
pattern of the original onto a substrate to be exposed to  
manufacture a device;

replacing with a particular gas, using gas purging  
means, an inside space which contains optical components of at